

Utah Recruitment Initiative

Assisting Utah employers in maintaining a competitive edge by attracting essential talent.

With the state of Utah at basically full employment, a major talent recruiting initiative by the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), in conjunction with the private sector and other state agencies, has been developed over the past several months to head off a potential labor shortage that could widely impact Utah's employers.

Beginning in October 2006, and at the personal request of Governor Jon Huntsman, GOED has formed an action group made up of representatives of the Department and specific members of the GOED Board as well as EDCUtah, Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, recruitment companies, the Utah Department of Workforce Services, Utah Department of Commerce, Utah Technology Council along with members of private industry, tasked with development and implementation specifically of a statewide, regional, and national recruitment effort to Utah beginning first in all fields of engineering and other professionals.

At the present time some of Utah's largest employers such as ATK, Williams International, IM Flash, Micron, and L-3 Communications among others, including the Utah Technology

Council, have identified a need for immediate placement of approximately 1,000 trained engineers.

The effort by the GOED recruitment task force, according to Jason Perry, Executive Director of the Department, is to address and find ways of filling this industry need as well as being able to then replicate those recruitment actions in other fields, such as pharmacists, nurses, machinists, etc.

This effort has, and will, include actions such as a national media and marketing campaign, both paid and earned, as well as attendance by the state of Utah in partnership with private industry to recruitment trade shows around the nation.

During last year's holiday season the initiative implemented the "Here for the Holidays" media campaign with placement of ads in many of the Wasatch Front newspapers. The ads contained a special message from Governor Huntsman encouraging friends and family of those returning for the holidays to point out there were good engineering jobs to be had in Utah. That same message was directed to those who might be in Utah on ski vacations.

"GOED received more than 150 resumes immediately following the ads running," said Perry. "And we still manage to have some trickling in each week from that effort. And from what we have been able to determine several engineers obtained jobs through being motivated to begin looking in Utah because of those ads."

The national effort in the initiative will get its first exposure on Sunday, October 28, when an ad touting living and working in Utah makes its debut in a special newspaper section in cities ranging from Boston to Dallas, Austin, Houston, Los Angeles and areas of Orange County, San Diego, San Francisco and Chicago. It is estimated the ad will be seen by approximately 3.1 million readers and have a shelf life of at least 50 to 100 days.

"We are still looking for partners in all major industries to join with us in combining their recruiting efforts with those that the state is undertaking in what is shaping up to be one of the major economic development issues of the coming year," said Perry. ①

For information about the GOED recruitment initiative and to obtain a participation agreement please call (801) 538-8743.

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Photograph by Luke Behrman

